

## **Bethany CEDS Outreach Meeting**

October 1, 2012

City Hall

7:00-8:30 p.m.

### **Facilitators**

Will Warren  
Barbara Malmberg

### **Attendees**

Elizabeth Appel  
Charles Johnson  
Tom Cavaliere

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - What Bethany would like to see for the town
    - Bethany wants to preserve its current character, style of life
    - Need to develop a town center
    - Need paid staff for town economic development to do outreach, submit grants
    - Use regulations to provide transportation rather than dictate number of parking spaces
    - Industrial park
  - Obstacles
    - Lacks infrastructure to support business
    - Weak transportation system
    - Don't see Tweed as an economic driver (Oxford Airport is the driver in Bethany)
    - Land parcels are too small to do any large development
    - Economic development occurs at the real estate level, at a plot by plot basis
    - The businesses that do exist in Bethany are hidden and feel isolated
  - Strengths
    - Educated, affluent workforce
    - Need to capitalize on vo-tech schools and community colleges to develop workforce
    - Ideal for businesses who would like a campus-like setting
  - Vulnerabilities
    - Dependent on Laticrete
  - Regional opportunities
    - Shared services, such as a grant writer – though not interested in sharing educational services
  - REX can assist by
    - Research best practices and educate the cities and towns in the region

- Create a template of what kinds of business can be supported with the current infrastructure
- Measurements of success/decline
  - Personal income

**Branford Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
Branford Economic Development Representatives  
*December 2, 2012*

Attendance: Terrence Elton (Branford); Unk DaRos (First Selectman); Shirley Rasmussen (Branford); Ellsworth McGuigan (Branford-PZ Chair); Will Warren (REX); Ginny Kozlowski (REX)

The meeting began at approximately 2:14 p.m.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

*Will Warren* thanked the group for allowing REX to be there. The group went around the room and gave introductions and *W. Warren* began with the presentation.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

*W. Warren* prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part was to hear what Branford had to say and to get their input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region and how best we could all work together toward economic vitality. He continued by providing a brief overview of the CEDS, its background and why REX is doing outreach to all 15 municipalities in the region.

**3. REX Background**

*W. Warren* explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. He described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. He explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the region and its robust transportation network.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

*W. Warren* explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and he briefly discussed the 6 goals. He also mentioned the executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS that had been distributed to the group.

**5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

*W. Warren* explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic Development District (EDD). He explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). He explained that there was currently \$1.5 million in EDA funding pending. He continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire

project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

## **6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data**

*W. Warren* gave a brief demographic/economic overview of Branford and the region. He explained how Branford compared to the region demographically, and how Branford was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. He also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and the relative strengths of the regional sectors compared to the State and Nation.

## **7. Discussion and Input**

*W. Warren* finished the presentation and began the facilitation portion by asking the first question.

**Question 1:** *W. Warren* asked the group what their vision was for Branford and the region in regards to economic development and if they were compatible.

- It was stated that the vision was in the CPD plan and other materials, including CERC visioning, that REX possesses; CERC identified target business industries;
- Branford's vision was stated as doing more of the same; Branford is a full service community;
- Currently have 100 acres zoned industrial, access on East Main Street;

**Question 2:** *W. Warren* asked about the strengths, weaknesses and obstacles in regards to economic development in Guilford and the region.

- Strengths – Workforce and worker production;
- Town infrastructure/sewer, as mentioned a full service community, when adjacent towns are not;
- Access to transportation;
- Have developable land;
- Regional Universities;
- Weaknesses – Workforce training was thought to be weak;
- Needed improvements in the community college (technical) system, including funding;
- Cost of living was thought to be high;
- Missing a good hotel;
- Opportunities – Town is willing to embrace change;
- Port and TWEED were thought to be major assets and opportunities/critical to region, if improved and invested in.

**Question 3:** This question was previously covered and not necessarily asked.

**Question 4:** This question was not covered.

**Questions 5:** *W. Warren* asked how we all could work together to make the region more competitive.

- The town did fill a part of a region, and felt was willing to work together;
- A problem is that municipalities compete against one another in regards to taxes and that won't change unless there is some change to tax policy;
- Property tax and real estate tax is a problem, need to work together to support issues;
- Shared services was thought to be a good idea, and is currently being done: examples – Animal Control with North Branford and Health Districts with North Branford and East Haven;
- Energy and technology could work regionally (past example, regional energy audits); Need regional energy agenda; Clean energy task force; Regional transfer stations.

#### **8. Future Action and Ideas**

It was discussed for future comment the members could go to the REX website, or wait until the first CEDS draft and provide comment then.

As no more actions and ideas were being discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

**Guilford Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
Guilford Economic Development Representatives  
*November 30, 2012*

Attendance:

The meeting began at approximately 8:18 a.m.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

*Ginny Kozlowski* thanked the group for allowing REX to attend the meeting, and then introduced *Will Warren* (REX). She continued by explaining the purpose and background of the CEDS process and that REX was there to gather input from the committee. She followed by introducing *W. Warren* again and turning the presentation portion over to him.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

*W. Warren* prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part was to hear what Guilford had to say and to get their input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region and how best we could all work together toward economic vitality. He continued by providing a brief overview of the CEDS, it's background and why REX is doing outreach to all 15 municipalities in the region.

**3. REX Background**

*W. Warren* explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. He described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. He explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the region and its robust transportation network.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

*W. Warren* explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and he briefly discussed the 6 goals. He also mentioned the executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS that had been distributed to the group.

**5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

*W. Warren* explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic Development District (EDD). He explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). He explained that there was currently \$1.5 million in EDA funding pending. He continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street

Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

## 6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data

*W. Warren* gave a brief demographic/economic overview of Guilford and the region. He explained how Guilford compared to the region demographically, and how Guilford was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. He also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and the relative strengths of the regional sectors compared to the State and Nation.

## 7. Discussion and Input

*W. Warren* finished the presentation and began the facilitation portion by asking the first question.

**Question 1:** *W. Warren* asked the group what their vision was for Guilford and the region in regards to economic development and if they were compatible.

- The improvement of infrastructure was described as a vision, or more as a need for the town;
- An economic vision was described as attracting light manufacturing to the town; this attraction was to include office space, with a focus on the medical/health sector (because it is so important in the region); businesses identified to attract were described as clean business, currently have 100,000 square feet of office space available; There was a need to address amount of available space; Other sector attractions that were mentioned were tourism and retail;
- It was stated that there is high-end retail located downtown and low-end (such as Wal-Mart) elsewhere, however, there was no middle retail; Middle retail was thought to be a significant need and there was space available to support, mentioned the "Rock pile" and the 100,000 square feet of office space (there has been no movement on either in some time);
- Commercial vacancy rate in Guilford is low, backfilling is up;
- It was described that business that are in Guilford want to stay in Guilford and expand;
- Would like a vision of commercial tax revenue being greater than 10% of total revenue, however, not a lot of vacant land;
- A lot of open space and the plan is to keep it that way;
- Regionally speaking, it was stated that the region didn't function as a region; There was a considerable amount of employment outside of the region (for residents that live in the region);
- Weak region in regards to industrial employment;
- Stagnant employment and blame New Haven and Yale; Healthcare employment is disproportionate, with low income jobs being the bulk;

- Manufacturing shows benefit, however, all the infrastructure to support is in New Haven, but employment possibilities for Guilford residents
- Land use in a coordinated fashion;
- Grow commercial tax base in New Haven, shouldn't be a vision to grow non-profits;
- Vision for economic development was thought to be more than a regional problem, but a State problem, not very business friendly (tax code, policy, regulations, etc.);
- There seemed to be same issues in New Haven as the rest of the region, however, New Haven gobbles up the State resources;
- Vision for one region is non-existent, many commute outside of region for work;
- Vision for tourism, looking at other forms of revenue generation (example theatre), however, tourism in region and state not a secure and consistent support base.

**Question 2:** *W. Warren* asked about the strengths, weaknesses and obstacles in regards to economic development in Guilford and the region.

- Strengths – Great green and uniqueness of the town characteristics; shopping is good; high quality of life; Tourism, great stop over going to the city;
- Train, build upon strength, stations and TOD development;
- Schools;
- Young people associated with Yale, and positive relationship among Yale and Guilford;
- Cultural activities;
- Opportunities – Information sector as a growth industry, back office (intellectual not IT);
- Enhancement of commuter rail and mass transit was thought to be a major opportunity for the region;
- Weaknesses – TWEED, not a viable option, unreliable, putting more money into TWEED was thought to be a bad idea (not going to work);
- State money is in Hartford area, example is Jackson labs (bad idea to put there);
- Manufacturing was thought not going to be able to exist in the state, regulations were a problem;
- Skilled labor force in the areas needed, Energy and Advanced Manufacturing;
- Tech schools and workforce training was thought to be a weakness;
- Tax base burden is on residential;
- Cost of living is high, inability to attract 20's and 30's because of challenge of cost;
- Continuing decline in State revenue, increase in utility cost, increase in healthcare;
- Obstacles – Hotel and Tourism industry, there isn't an adequate Hotel/Convention site in the region, could be a valuable asset;
- Guilford doesn't necessarily want Tourism/Buses coming into the town;
- An obstacle to regionalism was stated that it felt like there were several different regions within our region; New Haven wants people to come in from Shoreline, however, not vice-versa;
- Regulations were thought to be an obstacle;

- Affordability, especially in regards to housing was thought to be an obstacle (not much mixed used development in Guilford);
- There was an obstacle in regards to town attitude and that most did not want density, however, there seem to be a density issue.

**Question 3:** This question was previously covered and not necessarily asked.

**Question 4:** *W. Warren* asked what measurements are true indicators of economic growth or decline.

- Housing Starts/Permits; Overall Population; Median Household Income; Median Age

**Questions 5:** *W. Warren* asked how we all could work together to make the region more competitive.

- COG worked very closely together;
- There was thought to be a higher concentration of funds spent in New Haven, West Haven, etc, other than the shoreline communities;
- Could be a way for town planners to get together regularly;
- Land-use in a coordinated fashion;
- Regional TOD's and communication as to development of these areas;
- Regional purchasing;
- Need a monthly outlet for key stakeholders to get together, including representatives from outside of the region.

## **8. Future Action and Ideas**

It was discussed for future comment the members could go to the REX website, or wait until the first CEDS draft and provide comment then.

As no more actions and ideas were being discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

## Hamden CEDS Outreach Meeting

October 9, 2012

City Hall

5:30-7:00 p.m.

### **Facilitators**

Ginny Kozlowski  
Barbara Malmberg

### **Attendees**

Anthony Sacchetti  
Dale Kroop  
David DeNicols  
Donald Moses  
Steven Diaz  
Robert Zambrano  
Anthony DelGrego  
Mayor Scott Jackson

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - What Hamden would like to see for the town
    - More cooperation between business and zoning and other town entities
    - Want to be tagged as “business-friendly” – still anecdotal evidence of dissatisfaction
    - A “circuit breaker” to assist businesses that are in trouble before they close
    - Apply best practices from other cities/towns in the region to become more attractive to business
    - Improvements in zoning to attract business
    - Tax foreclosure properties to produce income for the town
    - Find the right kind of economic development projects for large parcels
    - Need to create new opportunities instead of recycling existing properties – don’t just want to flip stores
    - Would like to add a business park
    - Redefine land usage regulations – will be controversial
  - Strengths
    - Many very small businesses supporting local economy
  - Obstacles
    - Very little commercial land available
    - What land is available is north of Rte. 40 – area lacks infrastructure to support commercial development, no sewers, inadequate transportation
    - Need to reclaim brownfields - it takes 5 – 10 years to clean up a brownfield
    - Some difficulty finding workers with the appropriate skills for the available jobs

- Need to provide better understanding among all city departments to promote economic development
- Cost of housing
- Insufficient transportation, but less of an issue than in Fairfield County
- Need east-west bus routes
- Vulnerabilities
  - Expansion of non-tax paying entities, for examples losing 2 houses to Quinnipiac University for the museum
  - We are drawn to the large, expensive and prolonged transportation projects when we could achieve a lot by adding more buses – long time before these projects reach fruition
- Regional opportunities
  - Over 7800 Hamden residents work in New Haven
  - If Hamden wants to remain a bedroom community, we need to support economic development in other towns
  - Refer inquiries that Hamden can't accommodate to other towns
  - Need to keep graduating students in the region
  - For Tweed to be an economic driver in the region, the runway expansion must be completed to allow for additional carriers
  - Shared services
    - i. Use WPCA model
    - ii. School busing
    - iii. Trash collection
    - iv. Snow plowing
  - More marketing of programs available to employers for workforce development
  - Promote workforce programs for veterans
  - Strengthen ties between local businesses and the colleges and universities
- Measurements of success/decline
  - Tax list
  - Grand List growth
  - Vacancy rate
  - Employment rate
  - Residential foreclosure rates

**Madison Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
Madison Economic Development Commission  
*September 13, 2012*

Attendance: Ed Pellegrino, Ryan Duques (Madison EDC, Chairman), Eric Perrelli, Mike Skonieczny, Anne Foley, Jim Ball, Terry Buckley, David Anderson (Town of Madison), Joan Walker, Jan Nelson (Webmaster), Will Warren (REX Development), Dave Rackey (REX Development-Strategic Planning Committee), Leslie Cosgrove (Garnet Consulting)

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

R. Duques called the Madison EDC meeting to order at 7:31 p.m., followed by introductions among the group. The Madison EDC continued with regular business. At 8:02 R. Duques turned the meeting over to REX Development. W. Warren thanked the Madison EDC for allowing REX Development to outreach to the Town of Madison and continued by introducing himself, Dave Rackey and Leslie Cosgrove. D. Rackey introduced himself and explained that as part of the Strategic Planning Committee he had been interviewing businesses in the region and would be happy to discuss his findings. L. Cosgrove introduced herself and explained she was a consultant with Garnet Consulting that REX has contracted with and that she was part of the CEDS process in 2008 as well.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

W. Warren prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part of the night was to hear what Madison had to say and to get their input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region and how best we could all work together toward economic vitality. He explained the purpose of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and that REX was doing outreach to all of the 15 towns in the region. He furthered by explaining the CEDS process, that it was a federally required document by EDA in order to get funded, but that it should be regarded as more than that, as a work plan for the entire region. He also explained that what they hear from the outreach sessions will be used by the REX Strategic Planning Committee to formalize an action plan for the 5-year CEDS update.

**3. REX Background**

W. Warren explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. He described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. He explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the comparison between the county line and the REX municipalities.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

W. Warren explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and he briefly discussed the 6 goals. He also passed out to the group an executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS for the group to read/take home.

#### **5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

W. Warren explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic Development District (EDD). He explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). He furthered, because of the CEDS process and designation, REX has received \$60,000 in planning monies from EDA over the past year, \$1.5 million from EDA was currently pending approval on projects in the region and that millions of new public and private investment has been leveraged as a result. He continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

#### **6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data**

W. Warren gave a brief demographic/economic overview of Madison and the region. He explained how Madison compared to the region demographically, and how Madison was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. He also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and how clusters in the region have been performing over the last five years.

#### **7. Discussion and Input**

L. Cosgrove reintroduced herself and continued with facilitating the group and asking the scheduled questions for feedback/comment.

**Question 1:** L. Cosgrove asked the group what their vision was for Madison and the region and if they were compatible (in regards to economic development).

- There needed to be/would like to see stronger residential growth and diversity in Madison;
- The importance of the school system in Madison was discussed and the unexpected growth in the youth. There was anticipated to be an over 100 person drop in school enrollment this school year and the numbers have shown an increase in 175 students;
- The school system uptick was described as possibly being from people leasing/renting homes. The affordability to live in Madison, and the high costs were anticipated problems for people moving into town;
- In order to grow residentially it was suggested there needed to be a change in zoning, as well as more housing options;
- It was stated that the town currently has retail, but would be interested in attracting more light industrial, hi-tech/knowledge jobs to the area;

- It was stated that there was a strong rail presence in Madison;
  - *L. Cosgrove* asked how economic development was perceived in the community;
  - It was stated that in the past Madison has not been successful with a lot of new projects because residents seem to not want anything new. There have been a few exceptions, for instance the Madison Hotel; however, a Holiday Inn got rejected. Not particularly interested in the large chain companies, “Big Box” was a major concern;
  - There was a small discussion around the Bradley Road Vision Study that detailed the benefits of a hotel. Although it was thought to be a reasonable opportunity, it was suggested that people were not going to pay high prices for a B&B;
  - It was important for Madison to remain unique and to keep the character of the town;
  - Comments from the committee suggested they were interested in attracting the knowledge based/hi-tech industries that are housed in clean/nice buildings. Biotech was also spoken of as a potential light industrial revenue driver for the town.
  - *L. Cosgrove* asked if the group/town had a vision statement for economic development and the response was that the PCD did not;
  - *L. Cosgrove* asked from a regional perspective what they thought about economic development;
  - It was suggested that Madison and people in Connecticut towns in general do not think regionally. There were comments of people that had lived in other States/areas that saw regionalization, but didn’t see it the same way in Madison/CT;
  - It was commented that most of the regional opportunities happened with Guilford in terms of shared services and economies of scale;
  - The group was adamant that in no way would the school districts ever consolidate;
  - The group commented that in order to work regionally, they would be interested in leveraging buying power with other municipalities (i.e. regional purchasing), marketing the region and transportation components that are helpful for all. Anything that would save money without services going down would be acceptable;
  - It was understood that there was interconnectedness with New Haven and that Madison feeds off of that in regards to employment, and employees looking for places to live.
- Question 2:** *L. Cosgrove* asked about the strengths and weaknesses in regards to economic development in Madison and the region.
- Some of the suggested strengths for Madison were the school system, culture, “hometown feel”, quaint community; and, they want to keep it that way;
  - Weaknesses were trying to construct things in town when people wanted to preserve; and the structure of government/first selectman/referendum;
  - Some other suggested strengths were that when people move to Madison they tend to stay here and that crime was low relative to the rest of the region; as well as LOCATION.
  - Challenges that were focused on were the residential tax base/did they need to increase property taxes; taxes were higher on the water; property revaluation hasn’t happened yet; large businesses aren’t attracted to Madison; social media perceived to be a challenge because quick and sometimes incorrect information is messaged.

**Question 3:** *L. Cosgrove* asked the group what roles they saw for the public and private sectors in promoting economic development.

- The Economic Development Commission was seen as an example of private participation, as a majority of the members are from the private sector;
- As an example, the funding of the Madison football field, private donations on top of the town support of \$800,000;
- *L. Cosgrove* asked what how they thought about it from the regional perspective.
- The West Haven ED forum and site selector visits were suggested;
- Towns getting together, for example SCRCOG and REX;
- The group felt that the regional cooperation was sporadic; they gave specific examples of cost sharing/pooling that could work.

**Question 4:** *L. Cosgrove* asked the group what they thought were good measurements of economic growth and decline.

- Tax Revenue/Lower residential tax
- Bond Rating
- Jobs, it was suggested that although the unemployment rate in Madison is currently high for Madison, relatively it is very low...has been below 5% in the last couple of months;
- *L. Cosgrove* asked about the region.
- Job Creation;
- Utilities/especially price of electricity;
- Incentives for clean energy;
- Rail improvements and Transportation; It was suggested that Tweed regional airport was not looked at favorably because it only offered one stop, and most thought Philadelphia was not a viable option; The group suggested that at least one more stop at Tweed would be helpful, potentially D.C.;
- Cell service was good, however, there was room for improvement.

Questions 5: *L. Cosgrove* asked the question how we could all work together to make the region more competitive; however, suggested that this question had already been answered.

- Because of previous recommendation, the only new suggestion was that Tourism has been pretty pathetic at the State level in the past couple of year;
- There was brief discussion around Tourism efforts in the State and how REX could work with Madison (and the Commission) to strengthen its ties with the State.

## **8. Future Action and Ideas**

W. Warren discussed with the group how directly and indirectly REX works with and for Madison, including discussing opportunities with businesses that are attracted to the region and to Madison. He continued by mentioning the REDFO meetings as networking opportunities to become better connected to other communities in the region.

As no more actions and ideas were being discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

## Meriden CEDS Outreach Meeting

October 24, 2012

City Hall

4:00-6:00 p.m.

### **Facilitators**

Ginny Kozlowski  
Barbara Malmberg

### **Attendees**

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1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
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  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - What Meriden would like to see for the town
    - Transit oriented development around train station – have 14 acre parcel next to current train station
    - Expecting a large increase in population in the next 5-10 years and would like to direct new residents to live in center city
      - i. Increase urban living – smart design
      - ii. Don't want McMansions
    - 300 acres on the border of Berlin – being considered as Research Pkwy West
    - Need to keep workers in the city to dine and shop
  - Strengths
    - Center of state
    - 35 minutes from 7 major cities
    - Rail route
    - Middlesex Community College satellite in Meriden is being changed to a full campus
    - Investment in public education, two high schools undergoing \$200 million renovation, using \$50 million of local funds
    - Doing –well getting state and federal funding, currently handling \$36 million in ED grants excluding health and education grants)
    - Good interdepartmental collaboration when coordinating major projects – common vision
    - Some high tech companies in plastics, protein science (FDA approval expected in January 2013)
    - Good mix of types of businesses
    - Community is stable overall
    - Good incentive programs
    - Active brownfields program → successful getting EPA dollars
    - No traffic issues, unlike other cities

- Need to promote assets
  - i. Outdoor activities, one of top ten public golf courses in the state, Hubbard park
  - ii. Middletown campus
  - iii. 200,000 people visit Silver Lights each holiday season – not translating into downtown visits
  - iv. Have underutilized airport
- Opportunity for 9 story mixed-use building
- Possible 72 acres for mixed use – like Clinton Crossing with apartments
- Obstacles
  - Limited capacity on Research Pkwy – 85-90% fully occupied based on current zoning
  - Very built out – only one very large parcel (100 acres), six 15-30 acre parcels and these are better suited for housing
  - Antiquated buildings
  - Few properties available for sale
  - Receiving inquiries for 20,000-30,000 square feet
  - Need to diversify housing stock – lots of affordable housing, The Mills is distressed
  - Difficult to attract large retailers – vacant Lowe’s on east side, near I-91 and Rt. 15
  - Negative reputation
  - Biggest obstacle is the economy – need real estate development on sturdier footing
- Vulnerabilities
  - Need better balancing of residential vs. commercial (too high)
  - Flooding issues in center city (11 floods in 150 years)
  - Median age is not representative of population, population is skewed, large groups of very young and old
  - Lack of disposable income,
  -
- Regional opportunities
  - High speed rail and community rail can tie together strong knowledge corridor from New Haven through Massachusetts into Vermont, “Aerospace Alley”
  - Increase association between towns
  - Region should really be larger
- Measurements of success/decline
  - 3 or 4 good restaurants being successful in town
  - Housing starts may not be indicative of economic growth because Connecticut is already so built up

**Milford Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
Milford Economic Development Commission  
*October 24, 2012*

Attendance: Mark Bender (Milford Planning and Zoning Board-Chair), John O'Neil (Milford EDC), Bob Gregory (Milford Director of Economic Development), Cyrus Settineri (Milford EDC-Chair), Joseph Agro (Milford Board of Finance), Bob Stanton (Milford EDC), Rick Scinto (New Haven Register), Susan Patrick (Milford EDC), Ginny Kozlowski (REX), Will Warren (REX)

Meeting was called to order at 8:19 a.m.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Introductions were given from the group. *Ginny Kozlowski* thanked the group for allowing REX to attend the meeting, and then introduced *Will Warren* (REX). She continued by explaining the purpose and background of the CEDS process and that REX was there to gather input from the committee.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

*G. Kozlowski* prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part was to hear from Milford representation and to get input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region. She continued by providing a brief overview of the CEDS, its background and why REX is doing outreach to all 15 municipalities in the region.

**3. REX Background**

*G. Kozlowski* explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. She described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. She explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the region and its robust transportation network.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

*G. Kozlowski* explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and she briefly discussed the 6 goals. She also mentioned the executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS that had been distributed to the group.

**5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

*G. Kozlowski* explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic Development District (EDD). She explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). She explained that there was currently

\$1.5 million in EDA funding pending. She continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

## 6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data

*G. Kozlowski* gave a brief demographic/economic overview of Milford and the region. She explained how Milford compared to the region demographically, and how Milford was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. She also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and the relative strengths of the regional sectors compared to the State and Nation.

## 7. Discussion and Input

*G. Kozlowski* finished the presentation by asking questions of the group.

**Question 1:** *G. Kozlowski* asked the group what their vision was for Milford and the region in regard to economic development and if they were compatible.

- It was discussed that the maturity of Milford stifles further development;
- Milford is thought to be highly developed, with a typical indicator being housing, no housing left to develop (last housing boom was in the 90's);
- There are several corridors of big box retail in Milford;
- Construction and renovations have been down in Milford since the recessionary period, however, commercial rental has been decent;
- Downtown has been a major focus for the vision of Milford, however, there still needs to be a push to improve;
- Real Estate is a key industry in Milford, 400 houses for sale with a spill-over effect being jobs;
- There seems to be apparent distressed housing;
- There needs to be a focus on commercial development, both existing and construction; Developers have shown interest; There seems to be a lot of underutilized property, which needs to be a focus;
- There was a discussion around Stamford versus Milford and the younger interest in working in Stamford; There was a discussion that the younger population working in Stamford should/could choose to live in Milford, however, there still was a desire to attract commercial development in Milford as Stamford has done;
- It was discussed that Milford's major industries were spread throughout the town and that downtown was not the HUB;
- It was also discussed that in the plan for conservation and development, Milford wanted to preserve the small town atmosphere;

- There was a desire and vision for corporate office space, with potential for a corporate campus style environment;
- There was a discussion around open space and redevelopment, specifically a commitment to open space;
- There was also discussion around an increased rental property base with an addition of 500 apartments, with a target for downtown.

**Question 2:** *G. Kozlowski* asked about the strengths, weaknesses and obstacles in regards to economic development in Milford and the region.

- Strengths identified were location and a strong rail, highway, parks and water system (including proximity to the coast);
- Mixed use development was considered a strength;
- Rental prices, although fairly expensive for adjacent locations (between \$1600 and \$1800) it is still well below that of Boston and New York City; Renters and household income was also higher and thought to be a strength;
- Lower price for commercial space;
- Metro-North rail was a major strength, as well as transportation in general; also, there is a considerably strong auto retail hub in Milford;
- The downtown area of Milford was thought to be an extreme positive and strength, as well as accessible beaches;
- Some weaknesses identified were workforce issues, including lack of qualified employees in the manufacturing industry, both regional and state wide;
- There was an identified need for workforce training.
- Some stated opportunities were the expansion of manufacturing;
- Strong defense and automobile industries;
- The expansion and marketing of Metro-North was seen as a key asset and opportunity;
- Developing the west side of the green in downtown for mixed use development (as identified in the plan for conservation and development);
- The expansion of Yale into West Haven was seen as a potential opportunity for Milford;
- TWEED was seen as a highly underutilized asset that could be seen as an opportunity;
- Milford Hospital was seen as an opportunity for growth.
- Some threats identified were the size of the buildings in the downtown area, most of which are under 3,000 square feet;
- The location of the courthouse being downtown was thought to be somewhat of an obstacle, considering the space could be used for mixed use development;
- Parking for commuters was seen as a slight obstacle;
- Little land left for the growth of existing industries;
- Although also considered a strength for commuters, the proximity of Stamford was seen as a threat in attracting commercial activity in Milford.

**Question 3:** *G. Kozlowski* asked what roles the group saw for the public and private sectors in promoting economic development.

- Leveraged investment was seen as a role for the private sector, making a majority of the investment from private sector;
- Working together in key growth partnerships, such as the expansion of Yale Hospital and the development of TWEED.

**Question 4:** *G. Kozlowski* asked what measurements are true indicators of economic growth or decline.

- Employment (economic health of business);
- Housing;
- Jobs;
- Although the grand list was often thought of as an indicator, it can be misleading;
- Age of housing;
- Age of automobiles.

**Questions 5:** *G. Kozlowski* asked how we all can work together to make the region more competitive.

- A major key identified in working together regionally was through marketing of the region;
- It was stated that Milford is tied into the success of Fairfield County;
- Some felt that Milford didn't need collaboration and didn't feel much was needed in the regard to regionalization; It was thought that Milford was very distinct and unique;
- It was state, however, that Milford needed regional support in regards to retail and being a travel destination;
- The hospitals were thought to be regional, but Milford needed a more vibrant medical facility;
- There wasn't a real vital urban area in the region, no destination location; New Haven was seen as the urban area, but too crime laden and unsafe; Funds should be focused on developing a more vibrant urban area.

## **8. Future Action and Ideas**

It was discussed for future comment the members could go to the REX website, or wait until the first CEDS draft and provide comment then.

The meeting concluded at 9:41.

**New Haven Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
New Haven Economic Development Commission  
*October 9, 2012*

Attendance: Kelly Murphy (New Haven); Jorge Lopes (Redevelopment Commission); Sarah Eidelson (Development Commission/Alderwoman); Chris Canna (New Haven); Tony Bialecki (New Haven); Pedro Soto (Development Commission); Pete Wilkinson (Development Commission); Robert Boldoc (Development Commission); Robert Casey (Development Commission); Antoine Scott (Development Commission); Will Warren (REX); Ginny Kozlowski (REX)

Meeting was called to order at 8:08 a.m., followed by a review and approval of minutes from previous meeting. The EDC continued with additional items on the agenda and turned the meeting over to REX.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

*Ginny Kozlowski* thanked the group for allowing REX to attend the meeting, and then introduced *Will Warren* (REX). She continued by explaining the purpose and background of the CEDS process and that REX was there to gather input from the committee. She followed by introducing *W. Warren* again and turning the presentation portion over to him.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

*W. Warren* prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part was to hear what New Haven had to say and to get their input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region and how best we could all work together toward economic vitality. He continued by providing a brief overview of the CEDS, it's background and why REX is doing outreach to all 15 municipalities in the region.

**3. REX Background**

*W. Warren* explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. He described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. He explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the region and its robust transportation network.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

*W. Warren* explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and he briefly discussed the 6 goals. He also mentioned the executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS that had been distributed to the committee.

**5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

*W. Warren* explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic

Development District (EDD). He explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). He explained that there was currently \$1.5 million in EDA funding pending. He continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

## 6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data

*W. Warren* gave a brief demographic/economic overview of New Haven and the region. He explained how New Haven compared to the region demographically, and how New Haven was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. He also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and the relative strengths of the regional sectors compared to the State and Nation.

## 7. Discussion and Input

*W. Warren* finished the presentation by turning the facilitating portion over to *G. Kozlowski*.

**Question 1:** *G. Kozlowski* asked the group what their vision was for New Haven and the region in regards to economic development and if they were compatible.

- Current plans for river street and mill river, focus on employment to New Haven;
- Land is already occupied, need to improve what is currently here;
- Need to focus on people living and working in New Haven;
- Brownfields, reused buildings vs. Greenfields; several examples in the region, one being in Orange where the sale green fields and build;
- Route 34 is a major challenge, time it takes to build is an obstacle, however, projects are happening; need to focus on attraction to New Haven;
- Again, living and working in New Haven is a goal – challenges are quality of schools, property tax and crime;
- Towns still identify with New Haven; Businesses want to identify with a central hub;
- Infrastructure, incentives, workforce;
- There are development issues, very competitive, however, a major issue is stopping the flow of jobs and people outside of the city; another formidable issue is the parking and transportation problems in the downtown area;
- Jobs pipeline is a current priority, how to get people in New Haven into jobs, training and linking by neighborhood;
- There has been a business retention strategy and effort, as well as attraction and reuse.

**Question 2:** *G. Kozlowski* asked about the strengths, weaknesses and obstacles in regards to economic development in New Haven and the region.

- Obstacles – qualified workers (specifically precision manufacturing); on the job training process; city incentives;
- Town to town competition;
- Strengths – staff is important and central; business friendly and local;
- Great transportation system;
- Commuter Rail, Hartford/Springfield is reliable and people will use;
- Need for increased manufacturing space/supply chain;
- Weaknesses – high taxes;
- Delay in process time to get project approval (Local and State)
- Challenge – reconfiguring training and workforce board, for not just New Haven but the region (i.e. Adult Training);
- Opportunity – TWEED, potential strength/need one more carrier; State ran both airports and utilize Bradley and Westchester; Two perspectives, 80-90%; transportation side

**Question 3:** *G. Kozlowski* asked what roles were seen for the public and private sectors in promoting economic development in the region.

- Public Training;
- New Haven as center for intellectual training (ex. Gateway);
- Resources, unaware of bountiful resources; large universities;
- Biggest impacts – Science Park, Route 34; Private development dollars and redevelopment;
- Cost – Public can incentivize, help out in cost drivers;
- Investment – Train/Infrastructure/Reinvestment.

**Question 4:** *G. Kozlowski* asked what measurements are true indicators of economic growth or decline.

- Employment levels; Tax Base; Occupancy (Commercial/Industrial)

**Questions 5:** This questions was primarily answered in the following questions, the one answer that was discussed in regards to how we all could work together to make the region more competitive.

- Advocating for investment (Advocacy).

## **8. Future Action and Ideas**

It was discussed for future comment the members could go to the REX website, or wait until the first CEDS draft and provide comment then.

As no more actions and ideas were being discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

**North Haven Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
North Haven Economic Development Commission  
*August 23, 2012*

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

- a. Richard LoPresti commenced the Economic Development Commission (Commission) meeting at 8:35 AM. Mr. Lopresti requested that the Minutes Agenda Item be postponed and to begin the meeting with the presentation by REX Development. There were no objections.
- b. Mr. LoPresti introduced Ginny Kozlowski and gave an overview of the role of REX Development. Mr. LoPresti explained that one of the requirements of the development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is public hearings.
- c. Ginny Kozlowski introduced the REX Development team in attendance: Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove (Consultants) ; Dave Racke (Strategic Planning Committee member), Christopher Rappa (SCRCOG, notetaker)

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

- a. Mrs. Kozlowski explained that this outreach meeting is the first step of input into the Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The purpose of the CEDS was discussed.
- b. Mr. LoPresti asked Mrs. Kozlowski to further explain the CEDS and why it is important to the Region. Mrs. Kozlowski asked Mark Waterhouse to address this question. Mr. Waterhouse explained that the action items in the CEDS should be followed whether or not your community to receiving EDA funds.

**3. REX Background**

- a. Mrs. Kozlowski discussed how REX is a facilitator that strives to obtain state and federal resources to fulfill their mission.
- b. Mrs. Kozlowski welcomed Carl Amento, Executive Director of SCRCOG (Strategic Planning Committee member).
- c. Mrs. Kozlowski presented a map of the South Central Region. Congressional representatives serving the Region were named.
- d. Mrs. Kozlowski presented the 2008 CEDS Vision Statement and asked the Commission to understand that the world has changed dramatically since 2008.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

- a. Mrs. Kozlowski welcomed the co-chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, Hamden Mayor Scott Jackson.
- b. Mrs. Kozlowski briefly discussed the 2008 CEDS, specifically the six identified focus areas.

**5. Results of Prior CEDS**

- a. Mrs. Kozlowski highlighted that REX Development is the first regional economic development organization to receive Federal Economic Development District designation in the State of Connecticut. This included a discussion of the value of the economic development district designation. The two federally economically distressed communities in the Region are New Haven and Meriden.

## 6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data

- a. Mrs. Kozlowski presented key demographic and socioeconomic changes since 2008. This included a discussion of the unemployment rate (which is starting to come down, however, there is work ahead for the Region) and specific indicators related to the town of North Haven. Mr. Waterhouse explained that a requirement of the CEDS is a detailed economic profile of the Region. Mr. Waterhouse briefly explained Location Quotients and Shift-Share Analysis. Mr. LoPresti asked that the Regional Cluster Performance Slide (bubble chart) be re-visited. A Commission Member asked if the PowerPoint Presentation will be posted on the internet. Mr. Waterhouse informed the Commission that the Fabrication Metal Product Manufacturing sector has 50% more employment than the nation. The chart was created by Will Warren, of REX Development. Mr. LoPresti asked if the Region should focus on the larger data points or the smaller data points. It was noted by Mr. Waterhouse that larger data points that are contracting may have a retention problem. First Selectman Michael Freda asked if the Star and Emerging sections of the bubble chart are the most important. Mrs. Kozlowski said that the contracting of the data points could also be related to efficiencies due to technological advances (requiring fewer workers). A Commission Member expressed concern over the lack of data labels for some data points. Mrs. Kozlowski said that missing data labels will be included in the final product. First Selectman Freda asked if the healthcare sector will be included in the final chart. Mr. LoPresti brought up the importance of supply chains.

## 7. Discussion and Input

- a. Prior to asking specific questions to the Commission Members, Mrs. Kozlowski noted that any additional answers, ideas, suggestions, or comments can be e-mailed to her, Leslie Cosgrove, or Mr. LoPresti.
- b. What is your vision of economic development in North Haven and the Region in the next 5 years? Do you see these visions as complementary or divergent?
  - i. First Selectman Freda said that there are a myriad of opportunities in North Haven that can have a positive regional impact. An example is the train station that will be constructed on Devine Street. The future North Haven should have a portfolio of blended businesses, such as those that will be related to the support of Quinnipiac University (restaurants, retail, housing, etc.). First Selectman Freda thinks that there is still a room for manufacturing in North Haven. Universal Drive will still see growth, likely around the Rave Cinemas site. First Selectman Freda also stressed the importance of lowering North Haven's median age. Mrs. Kozlowski asked for comments from the Strategic Planning Committee members regarding FS Freda's comments.
  - ii. Mr. LoPresti asked that the Region also be considered, as First Selectman Freda's comments/ideas will not necessarily spread to the extreme corners of the Region. Mrs. Kozlowski gave an example of Otis Spunkmeyer – only 15% of employees are North Haven residents. She also brought up the redevelopment of the former

Quebecor site and asked where the employees will come from – Meriden, Hamden, Wallingford?

- iii. First Selectman Freda brought up a presentation from a SCRCOG Board Meeting. It is important to work with the Workforce Alliance and other recruiting agencies and companies. First Selectman Freda explained that the Council of Governments allows the Region's chief elected officials to work collaboratively.
  - iv. William Gambordella asked if there are enough people in the Region for companies to grow and prosper. Mrs. Kozlowski explained that Mayor Jackson and First Selectman Freda serve on the Workforce Alliance Board, who has a strategic plan to address this issue. Mayor Jackson talked about leveraging community colleges to develop the workforce (manufacturing as an example). It is a challenge, but there are models to follow. Mrs. Kozlowski talked about working with Jerry Clupper of the New Haven Manufacturers Association to address this workforce issue. She noted that unemployment ranges from high school students to those 60 and older. Mrs. Kozlowski is more concerned about employment and whether it is growing, rather than the unemployment statistic.
  - v. First Selectman Freda talked about Sustainable Buildings Systems on 297 State Street, who has the desire to work with the local colleges. This will require coordination of colleges like Quinnipiac and those in New Haven. Mrs. Kozlowski said that more partners will equate to more success.
- c. What are the key components to economic development in North Haven and the Region?
- i. First Selectman Freda said that a strength is to bring parties to the table – create synergies. A major threat is that Connecticut is a tough state to do business in from an energy costs standpoint, which is out of the control of the chief elected officials.
  - ii. Mrs. Kozlowski brought up the economic development tax credit formerly offered by the State of CT. Mr. LoPresti said that the biggest legislative effort would be to lower taxes rather than raise taxes (sales, gas tax, etc.). It is a combination of efforts that is vital. Mrs. Kozlowski asked Mr. Racke if taxes are still an obstacle to the companies he has interviewed. Mr. Racke agreed taxes are important, but energy is a much greater issue. He has found that businesses tend to stay here because people like living here. Mr. LoPresti asked about the role the energy companies will have in the development of the CEDS. Mr. LoPresti feels that educating businesses is important to retention. First Selectman Freda said that an obstacle is 515 Washington Avenue (assessed: \$684,000, owner wants \$1.2 million). It is difficult to reconcile the difference between the value of a site, what the seller wants, and what the buyer is willing to pay. Mrs. Kozlowski sees the fact that businesses are looking to locate here as a positive.
- d. What roles do you see for the public and private sectors in promoting economic development?
- i. Mrs. Kozlowski listed many of REX's energy-related partners (UI, Southern CT Gas, etc.).

- ii. Mr. LoPresti believes that collaboration among the Region's chief elected officials is very important. Many programs go underutilized because of a lack of knowledge of the programs. Mrs. Kozlowski talked about the Regional Leadership Council, the private sector component of REX Development. Mr. Amento stressed the importance of infrastructure (as well as streetscaping) as it helps to attract businesses (described as the classic role of government). First Selectman Freda explained that relationships must be in place for conversations and synergies to come about. REX Development has helped to provide these relationships.
- e. What measurements are true indicators of economic growth or decline?
  - i. Mr. Waterhouse said that job creation and capital investment statistics are not the most meaningful measures. Mrs. Kozlowski echoed this feeling when saying that new indicators need to be developed. First Selectman Freda offered comments related to the municipal component of this issue, specifically how grand list growth can be used as a key indicator.
  - ii. Mr. LoPresti said that non-profit businesses, although the town loses taxes, provide many benefits (ex. jobs, support of other businesses). First Selectman Freda gave an example related to the Easter Seals and North Haven and what the Town has gained from their partnership.
  - iii. Mr. Gambordella stressed that New Haven needs to continue to be a strong central city. He feels that the perception and vibrancy of New Haven has improved from twenty years ago, though it is not perfect. A Commission Member brought up that a recent newspaper poll that had negative comments about New Haven.
  - iv. Mr. LoPresti said that the Region needs to be ready to accommodate businesses ready to move out of the incubator phase. It was agreed by the Commission Members that New Haven is more important than towns to the north. Mr. Gambordella considers northern towns in the Region (like Meriden) to be somewhat separate. Mrs. Kozlowski explained that the Region's towns share business lead opportunities.
- f. How can we all work together to make the REX Region more competitive?
  - i. Mrs. Kozlowski said that this question was answered several times throughout this meeting. First Selectman Freda agreed.
  - ii. Once again, Mrs. Kozlowski said that this was not the final opportunity for the Commission Members to share their thoughts. First Selectman Freda felt this was a productive session.

## 8. Future Action and Ideas

- a. Mr. LoPresti requested that REX Development come back for a follow-up, perhaps in January/February. Mrs. Kozlowski reiterated that REX Development will continue to work with the Commission. Mrs. Kozlowski discussed the CEDS outreach process, including future meetings and surveying. Understanding the meaning of a CEDS is very important. Mr. LoPresti asked if Robert Lockery, the only public member of the Commission, had any comments. Mr. Lockery talked about how the volunteer effort of the Commission is important, but widely unknown to the general public.

- b. The presentation by REX Development was adjourned by Mr. LoPresti at 9:40 AM.
- c.

## Orange CEDS Outreach Meeting

October 2, 2012

City Hall

5:30-7:00 p.m.

### **Facilitators**

Ginny Kozlowski  
Barbara Malmberg

### **Attendees**

Paul Grimmer

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - a. Current status
    - i. Most development occurs in the area around I-95, exit 41 Marsh Hill Rd.
      1. Edison Rd. construction will be complete within 60 days, will add 60-70 acres
      2. There has been some interest in the Stew Leonard's site but nothing definitive
    - ii. PEZ Visitor Center anticipates more than 50,000 visitors in 2012
    - iii. Aurora (food packaging) project will increase square footage by 100,000 square feet and have 150 employees
    - iv. Yale moving the School of Nursing to former Bayer site
    - v. Orange train station under consideration
    - vi. Post Rd. vacancy rate is 5%
    - vii. Orange Transportation Management Authority
      1. Public/private partnership, UI, SCG and PEZ
      2. Started 3-4 months ago
      3. \$1 per day, 4 a.m. runs and 4 p.m. runs – occasional midnight shift runs for PEZ
      4. Looking to expand regionally and change routes to use train stations as hubs
    - viii. The Hubbell site is generating interest
    - ix. Orange Economic Development Corporation works closely with Economic Development Commission
      1. \$200,000 total budget with \$60,000 with the remainder raised through corporate contributions
      2. Manage day-to-day marketing efforts of the community
      3. Orange Life Magazine
      4. Annual Expo
      5. Now managing Transportation Management Authority

- 6. Maintain database of all available properties – updated monthly
- b. What is your vision of economic development in West Haven and the region in the next 5 years? Do you see these visions as complementary or divergent?
- c. Do you feel a part of the region?
  - i. Yes – with residents working in other cities and towns
  - ii. Collaboration with Yale and West Haven on the Bayer site
  - iii. Potential for railroad station to serve Orange, Milford and West Haven residents
- d. Strengths
  - i. No issues with finding qualified workforce
  - ii. New businesses in Orange, such as UI, are compatible with the Orange resident's skill sets
  - iii. Anticipate more residents working in Orange more high skill level jobs become available
  - iv. Housing market is turning around
    - 1. Some small, older homes for young couples/families
    - 2. Have housing options across the spectrum
    - 3. Few condos because of limited availability
    - 4. Community likes smaller population, limited growth – setting 2 acre minimum to maintain the town's character
    - 5. 55+ community on Milford-Derby Rd. – Have sewers from Derby – not being built on spec
  - v. Conveniently located near I-95, Rts. 15 & 34
- e. Weaknesses
  - i. Don't really have small properties for start-ups
  - ii. Would need to subdivide larger properties
  - iii. Small industrial zone
  - iv. No sewers
  - v. Need to address the issue of young people leaving the state for work
- f. Obstacles
  - i. Need railroad station
  - ii. Need to promote region externally to draw businesses – residents across the age spectrum
- g. Measures of success
  - i. Increase in the Grand List
  - ii. Decline in the square footage vacancy
  - iii. Total employment
- h. Collaboration
  - i. Actively support the railroad station to expedite the process – send letters to DOT and the Governor
  - ii. Share marketing information between the Town and REX to leverage our limited marketing budgets
  - iii. Market the region externally

- iv. Utilize career centers at local colleges and universities
- v. Review Pure Michigan campaign for best practices

**Regional Leadership Council CEDS Outreach Meeting**

February 28, 2013

Quinnipiack Club, New Haven

8:00-9:30 a.m.

**Facilitators**

Ginny Kozlowski  
Barbara Malmberg

**Attendees**

Bill Villano  
Len Matteo  
Robert Cox  
Mary Papazian  
Al Smith  
Roger Joyce  
Tony Rescigno  
Lou D'Antonio  
Dennis Regan  
Kevin Walsh  
Hugh Manke  
Anne Worcester  
Sandy Senich

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - a. As the Regional Leadership Council is the private component of REX's public/private organization, this meeting focused on the results of the other outreach meetings with comments from the group about these findings.
  - b. Roger Joyce, Chair of the RLC and REX Development Board Member) stressed the importance of the CEDS 5 Year Update. He also emphasized the positive effects the CEDS and U.S. Economic Development Administration and Connecticut designation of the region as an Economic Development District. The value of funding being available to all 15 towns, not just the three towns that currently meet the EDA measures of distress, is the opportunity for funding that can fully address issues of regional unemployment. As noted in the presentation, every town has more residents commuting to a different city/town than it has residents working in the city/town in which they live. The access to additional funding encourages regional projects that will have a positive impact on employment.
  - c. R. Joyce also asked about municipal cooperation and participation. Ginny Kozlowski noted we have seen significant improvement in both since joining the organization 3 years ago. There seemed to be a better understanding of the value of the CEDS and the regional impact of the economic vitality of the core city of New Haven.

- d. Tony Rescigno reported that he has consulted with the State about the importance of small businesses. Connecticut has 31,000 businesses registered with the State with approximately 88% being small businesses. He believes the new Business Express Program will have a positive impact.
- e. Mary Papazian from Southern Connecticut State University stated that the colleges in the region could play a major role in addressing the disparities between available jobs and the skill sets of the unemployed. Data that is currently available through Workforce Alliance could be utilized to predict gaps and it would be possible to develop certification programs, especially for return-to-college students.
- f. It was also noted that declining municipal budgets have sparked additional interest in regional cooperation. The South Central Regional Council of Government's (SCRCOG) current shared services study will help identify the best options for cooperation. There has also been exploration of the Canadian Model with privatized infrastructure improvements.

## Wallingford CEDS Outreach Meeting

October 17, 2012

City Hall

4:00-6:00 p.m.

### **Facilitators**

Ginny Kozlowski  
Barbara Malmberg

### **Attendees**

Doreen DeSarro  
Don Roe  
Mayor Bill Dickinson  
John Sullivan – comments via email

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - What Wallingford would like to see for the town
    - Explore possibility of a separate reduced plan for electricity as an incentive to attract new companies outside the current downtown rate reduction plan geographic area.
    - Incentive housing zone to address high cost of housing (currently stalled)
    - Expand manufacturing base
    - Transit oriented development around train station – wayfinding to downtown
  - Strengths
    - Ideally located between New Haven and Hartford
    - Strong manufacturing base – have consistently worked to recruit and retain manufacturers in town, less emphasis on retail
    - Existing manufacturers are investing in expansion in Wallingford
    - Higher education and healthcare can spur commercial products and services
    - Bioscience – Science Park in New Haven
  - Obstacles
    - High cost of utilities – especially electricity
      - i. Review legislative initiatives (existing and new) that might impact energy costs
    - Open jobs not matching the skills of residents – disconnect between public education and manufacturing
    - Simplify process for participating in government programs – address legacy of being cumbersome – currently underutilized because they are not marketed and perceived as not being worth the effort
  - Vulnerabilities
    - Expansion of non-tax paying entities

- Concerns about traffic delays with additional trains from New Haven – Hartford – Springfield rail line around Center St.
- Growth in healthcare and education doesn't support the tax base – need to drive development of tax generating entities
- Must maintain infrastructure
- Regional opportunities
  - New Haven – Hartford – Springfield rail project
    - i. Work with all towns along the rail project to develop consistent brand without losing each town's individuality
    - ii. Work with all towns to develop a cohesive plan regarding business recruitment around each train station
    - iii. Resolve issue where folks can't easily travel from New Haven's Union Station to Wallingford – then address taxi stand issue (lack of) at the Wallingford train station
    - iv. New rail line could be a boon for downtown businesses if designed properly – need to be sure there is wayfinding to get passengers to downtown, not just get in their cars and leave
    - v. Check with Rutgers for analysis of NJ rail project
    - vi. Public transportation is a way to attract younger residents
  - Strengthen relationships between colleges and universities to retain more graduating students through internship programs, develop a broader age spectrum of residents – have REX act as a convener in this process
  - Marketing outside the region – companies moving into Wallingford generally come from within a 10 mile radius
  - Match business recruitment with skills of our residents
  - Focus on industrial parks rather than small retail for a better return on investment
  - Encourage Quinnipiac University to be more active in regional economic development activity
  - Support economic development initiatives in New Haven and Hartford - Wallingford's success is tied to the success of both New Haven and Hartford – can't just circle the wagons around Wallingford
- Measurements of success/decline
  - Employment rate
  - Tax list

**West Haven CEDS Outreach Meeting**

September 20, 2012

City Hall

6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Facilitators**

Leslie Cosgrove  
David Rackey  
Barbara Malmberg

**Attendees**

Meredith Allen  
Paul O'Sullivan  
William Kane  
Cynthia Beecher  
Ed Wise  
Steven R. Mullins  
David Car  
Mike Primer  
Elaine Braithwaite

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. PowerPoint Presentation
  - a. Overview and Purpose of Meeting
  - b. REX Background
  - c. Synopsis of Prior CEDS
  - d. Results of Prior CEDS
  - e. Presentation of Key Findings/Data
3. Discussion & Input
  - a. What is your vision of economic development in West Haven and the region in the next 5 years? Do you see these visions as complementary or divergent?
    - i. Utilize shorefront to generate economic activity
      1. Beach improvement hasn't generated any income. Paying for lifeguards, public works but it is unclear if visitors are spending any money at local businesses
      2. Connect new train station to the beach to attract visitors from New York
      3. Implementing pilot program for food & beverage kiosks along the boardwalk
      4. Concerns about current landowners being uninterested in improving the area
    - ii. Expressed concerns about losing tax base in West Haven through the hospital and universities
    - iii. Should bring in IT jobs to support health service industry and Yale. Stop outsourcing IT support out of the U.S.
    - iv. River Crossing project should not have residences – should be used to recruit small businesses to build tax base
    - v. Need a comprehensive economic development plan for West Haven
    - vi. Working on a master plan for the area around the new train station
    - vii. Need to utilize West Haven's underdeveloped harbor
  - b. Do you feel a part of the region?

- i. No
  - ii. It is difficult not having a county government structure
  - iii. Don't feel connected because there aren't shared services
  - iv. Every city is out for themselves
  - v. Cities/towns should stop poaching businesses from other towns in the region and work on attracting businesses from outside Connecticut
  - vi. Feel connected through arts, culture, dining and recreation with New Haven
- c. Strengths
  - i. Shoreline
  - ii. Need to develop stronger town/gown relationship with Yale and UNH
  - iii. Need to use existing library system more effectively – fund to bring its technology into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- d. Weaknesses
  - i. Insufficient tax base
  - ii. Increased population hasn't resulted in a stronger community
    - 1. Transient residents
    - 2. Large numbers of unemployed reliant on government assistance
    - 3. More apartment rentals than home ownership – would be more beneficial to have condos that are taxed as houses
  - iii. Blight issues
  - iv. Not promoting the assets of the city to area residents
- e. Obstacles
  - i. Deficit
  - ii. Low bond rating
  - iii. Aesthetics
    - 1. Remove power lines on Campbell Ave. to create a New England town green look and feel
    - 2. Insufficient staffing to enforce blight ordinances
    - 3. Bring back the old Savin Rock look and feel to the boardwalk area
- f. Measures of success
  - i. Increase in the Grand List
  - ii. Improved bond rating
  - iii. Lowering the deficit/debt
  - iv. Improved school test scores
  - v. Infrastructure
- g. Collaboration
  - i. Buy local program
  - ii. Combat the every town for itself mindset
  - iii. Identify the unique attributes of each city/town and promote those attributes as part of multi-faceted region.

**Woodbridge Outreach Meeting Minutes**  
Woodbridge Economic Development Commission  
*October 17, 2012*

Attendance: Mica Cardozo (Woodbridge EDC), Herb Mendelson (Woodbridge EDC), Diane Urbano (Woodbridge EDC), Paul Rossi (Woodbridge EDC), Jody Ellant (Woodbridge EDC), Ed Scheehy (Woodbridge First Selectman), Ginny Kozlowski (REX), Will Warren (REX)

Meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m., followed by a review and approval of minutes from previous meeting. The EDC continued with additional items on the agenda and turned the meeting over to REX at approximately 7:45.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

*Ginny Kozlowski* thanked the group for allowing REX to attend the meeting, and then introduced *Will Warren* (REX) and *Jerry Clupper* (a CEDS Strategic Planning Committee member). She continued by explaining the purpose and background of the CEDS process and that REX was there to gather input from the committee. She followed by introducing *W. Warren* again and turning the presentation portion over to him.

**2. Overview and Purpose of Meeting**

*W. Warren* prefaced the meeting by stating that the most important part of the night was to hear what Woodbridge had to say and to get their input in regards to economic strengths and challenges in the region and how best we could all work together toward economic vitality. He continued by providing a brief overview of the CEDS, its background and why REX is doing outreach to all 15 municipalities in the region.

**3. REX Background**

*W. Warren* explained that REX Development was created in 1996 by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) as the economic development arm of the SCRCOG and for the region. He described REX as a regional collaborator and driver of economic strategy with the purpose of improving the economic vitality for the entire region. He explained the region was the same footprint as the SCRCOG, made up of 15 municipalities in the region, and used a map to show the region and its robust transportation network.

**4. Synopsis of Prior CEDS**

*W. Warren* explained that the previous/current CEDS (from 2008) had 6 goals and 16 objectives and he briefly discussed the 6 goals. He also mentioned the executive summary booklet of the 2008 CEDS that had been distributed to the committee.

**5. Key Achievements/Success Stories**

*W. Warren* explained that over the past five years (through the CEDS) the region has been recognized as a State Regional Economic Development District (REDD) and a federal Economic

Development District (EDD). He explained that as a result of the designations, all 15 municipalities are now eligible for federal EDA funding, where previously it was just the distressed municipalities in the region (currently Meriden, New Haven and West Haven). He explained that there was currently \$1.5 million in EDA funding pending. He continued by describing four success stories over the past couple of years: West Haven-West River Crossing project; New Haven-River Street Redevelopment/Bulkhead project; Hamden-Goodrich/Daisy project; and Branford-Atlantic Wire project, all of which received federal funding and leveraged millions in private investment in the region.

## **6. Presentation of Key Findings/Data**

*W. Warren* gave a brief demographic/economic overview of Woodbridge and the region. He explained how Woodbridge compared to the region demographically, and how Woodbridge was effected regionally in terms of workforce, employment and revenue. He also explained the sector breakdown in employment in the region and the relative strengths of the regional sectors compared to the State and Nation.

## **7. Discussion and Input**

*W. Warren* finished the presentation by turning the facilitating portion over to *G. Kozlowski*.

**Question 1:** *G. Kozlowski* asked the group what their vision was for Woodbridge and the region in regards to economic development and if they were compatible.

- The decline in employment was discussed and seen as a problem for the region;
- The issue of taxes in the entire State was discussed, and it was stated that CT was number one in highest taxes. It was further stated that in order to remain competitive it was important to lower property taxes, and again there was concern over the individual income tax;
- A recent economic growth study (conducted by Yale for the Town) was discussed, explaining the vision for the plan/study and the development of the downtown business district utilizing mixed use development in this corridor;
- There was some issues involving the overall vision of growth in the community, consisting of the office and retail vacancy rates across the region and the competition among municipalities to fill those vacancies. Taxes was again discussed, and there was a question as to the threshold for when people would no longer consider moving to CT because of the tax levels. There was limited space to develop and the town had strict zoning (no spot-zoning).
- The vision was primarily for the downtown commercial district which consisted of primarily service industry businesses;
- There was a discussion of the trail system in the town, and the public-private partnership in regard to these trails. It was explained that the trails and recreational facilities in the town were a major regional attraction for Woodbridge;

- A new 50 (+) acre facility was in discussion to be developed of residential and commercial use, near Coachmen Square;
- There was a discussion around the older population in the community and whether or not additional assisted living facilities were needed/or wanted.

**Question 2:** *G. Kozlowski* asked about the strengths, weaknesses and obstacles in regards to economic development in Woodbridge and the region.

- Some strengths were the family oriented community life, which the town wanted to maintain;
- Single family housing was seen as a strength;
- Strong sense of community;
- Desirable senior housing;
- Low housing costs the region, compared to other regional urban desinations;
- Education was strong in the town.
- Some of the weaknesses discussed were taxes (CT, Local and individual);
- Workforce issues;
- Labor Costs were seen as a major issue, and heard from site selectors on tours;
- High energy and utility costs in the region were seen as a deterrent, however, it was discussed that some energy costs were decreasing and there was a lot of education and support from the utility companies in the region;
- Transportation issues in the region, specially I the town 69, 63 and Route 15. It was important to advocate to CT DOT. Also, lights could potentially be timed as it is done in other Cities/States;
- Tweed was seen as a weakness and a discussion followed describing the potential value of the airport and the importance of growth for the region. It was stated that for growth to occur in the region businesses need an airport within 35-45 minutes away. Sikorsky airport was seen as a potential alternative to Tweed;
- Rail was seen as a strength and a weakness, in the sense that additional service was needed, and high speed service was important to attract commuter from New York. It was discussed that a major marketing tool for the region to attract commuters from New York would be to utilize the rail and the lower housing costs in the area.

**Question 3:** This Question was covered in the previous discussions.

**Question 4:** This specific question was not asked.

**Questions 5:** Although not specifically asked, there was discussion around what we could do as a region to work together and become more viable. Below is that discussion:

- There was a discussion around the lack of a county system, and because of this it being hard to have a regional perspective;

- There needed to be regional support efforts, it was understood that as the region grows Woodbridge grows;
- Regional marketing could be key for the region;
- Discussion and coordination among the town EDC's;
- There was discussion around how we could all work together to expand Tweed and make the urgency more apparent and the progress faster;

#### **8. Future Action and Ideas**

It was discussed for future comment the members could go to the REX website, or wait until the first CEDS draft and provide comment then.

As no more actions and ideas were being discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.